



Puget Sound Partnership Update

October 2010

Science and Technical

Staff and the Partnership's science advisors are preparing to launch the initial version of the Puget Sound Science Update in November. The Science Update materials have been developed as a series of web pages that can be revised and updated (think wiki!) as members of the region's science community work with a scientist serving as the moderator for the Puget Sound Science Update to identify and develop new material to be presented as "content pending review." Using this approach and periodic reviews to more formally incorporate the new material, the Science Update will continually reflect new scientific findings and conclusions related to recovery of the Puget Sound ecosystem.

In October Puget Sound Partnership staff convened a series of four training sessions to develop staff skills in, and frame the Partnership's use of, the *Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation* as a tool to support key 2011 activities. These include setting targets for ecosystem conditions and reduction of pressures, updating implementation strategies in the Action Agenda, refining our Dashboard of ecosystem indicators, developing a Dashboard of pressures on the ecosystem, and developing a coordinated monitoring and assessment program. Training session participants included the agency's management team (Oct. 5) and key staff and partners who will help lead various activities using *Open Standards* tools. Follow up activities are underway and staff expect to develop drafts versions of *Open Standards* foundational materials — including lists of focal ecosystem components, depictions of linkages among ecological and human dimension components, list of key pressures on Puget Sound ecosystem -- by the end of November.

Partnership staff assisted on the steering committee of the South Sound Science Symposium at Little Creek near Shelton. Some 350 scientists, policy-makers and citizens attended this third annual symposium. The presentations and the venue were highly rated by about 90 percent of the attendees. This was the first venue for releasing preliminary data on the potential effect of Ocean Acidification on native oysters in south sound (a project funded by the PSP using EPA funds).

Partnership staff assisted in the development of pathogen, and nutrients and toxics reduction proposals, which were due to EPA on November 1. Planning for these EPA funds, which will be critically important for the six year timeframe in the Puget Sound basin, represent the best short and medium-long-term opportunities for

implementing the Action Agenda. Partnership staff also assisted in the other two topical areas of EPA proposals related to marine and nearshore, and watersheds.

Stormwater and Low Impact Development (LID)

The Stormwater Work Group is on track to develop a collaborative, comprehensive monitoring and assessment strategy for the region. On October 29, the Stormwater Work Group delivered recommendations for monitoring in the next round of municipal stormwater permits to Ecology. For more information see:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/psmonitoring/swworkgroup.html>

WSU Puyallup Research and Extension Center, working with the Partnership, Ecology and a broad-based Technical Advisory Committee, continued to update the LID Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound. A draft will be released in February for review, and the manual will be completed in July 2011. The Partnership, working with Ecology, began developing a “how to” guidebook with model ordinances to help all local governments (permitted and non-permitted) add LID to their codes. The UW LID Certificate Program started, with Partnership staff serving as a guest lecturer.

Invasive Species

Work is underway with an interagency team (RCO, WDFW, Ecology) to coordinate and develop policy improvements and draft legislation to build capacity in the state to prevent the introduction of invasive species and to respond to new invasions.

The Western Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species met, with Partnership staff on its executive committee. Partnership staff co-leads a series of meetings to coordinate, identify and align invasive species programs and policies related to marine invasive species between Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon and California. The purpose of the group is to provide a forum for sharing operational, program and policy information on marine and estuarine invaders; and, when appropriate, coordinate management strategies to address specific threats that cross state and provincial borders.

Finance and Budget

The Partnership worked with state and federal agencies to collect and complete the initial review of their cost estimates for implementing the Action Agenda in the 2011-13 Biennium. The Partnership provided an update of the Corrective Action Plan to respond to the State Auditor’s fiscal audit was submitted to the Office of Financial Management (OFM). The Partnership submitted its 2011-13 Biennial operating request and its 2011 Supplemental Operating Budget request to OFM. The Partnership also submitted revisions to its current cooperative agreement between the Partnership and EPA.

Boards

Although the Leadership Council and Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB) did not meet in October, much of October was used in preparation for 2011 with the

drafting of meeting schedules for adoption in November and December and solicitation of Science Panel and ECB North Central Action Area representative applicants. The Leadership Council will make the Science Panel and ECB appointments at its November 19 meeting.

The Science Panel met on October 12-13 where they discussed the Puget Sound Science Update chapters and plans for moving forward in 2020 target setting. A Science Panel work session is being planned for December 14 where they will meet with members of the Leadership Council and ECB to discuss the “Implications for Policy Makers” chapter of the Puget Sound Science Update.

Stewardship and ECO Net Program

Puget Sound Starts Here Dissemination Grants were awarded to ECO Networks. A total of \$93,970 from State proviso funds has been awarded through 13 contracts to ECO Networks for Puget Sound Starts Here brand dissemination projects. For a list of activities, contact Kristen.

Dave Ward is giving presentations on the Partnership's strategy for implementing section E.4 of the Action Agenda to all local ECO Networks. The presentations are a chance to better understand the strategy and social science underpinnings of the Action Agenda's outreach approach. They are also opening a broader discussion of the relationship between local and regional recovery efforts, and how we can work together most efficiently. For a list of meetings still to come, contact Kristen.

NOAA Project Design and Evaluation two-day trainings are being offered to ECO Net members in early November in Everett and Port Townsend as part of the Partnership's capacity building and training strategy for ECO Net members. For more information on the free trainings that NOAA Coastal Services Center offers, contact Kristen.

The Education, Outreach, and Stewardship Grant Team re-convened to begin laying out next steps for activities funded under the Partnership's EPA grant. This team, representing several agencies and organizations, was instrumental in developing the Partnership's application to the EPA for federal education funding. An expanded version of the team will reconvene in the future as the Stewardship Advisory Panel, and will provide strategic advice and expertise to the Stewardship Group as we move forward with work under Section E.4 of the Action Agenda.

Communications and Media Relations

Duane Fagergren was interviewed on Green Acres FM radio, related to reducing nitrogen in Lower Hood Canal. The story ran on several community and public radio stations, and the Seattle P-I.com.

The *Tacoma News Tribune*, *The Olympian* and the *Bellingham Herald* all ran front-page stories on the Partnership, our recent activities, and the leadership of David Dicks. The stories were timely and very well received.

Action Area Reports

San Juan Action Area

- The San Juan County/WRIA 2 Salmon Recovery Technical Advisory Group met with Puget Sound Recovery Implementation Technical Team (RITT) members and PSP staff to continue developing the Adaptive Management and Monitoring Plan for the WRIA 2 salmon recovery chapter. The group identified habitat components, key ecological attributes, and direct threats for the Chinook and freshwater ecosystem components in the San Juan County/WRIA 2 area using the Open Standards approach.
- The San Juan Accountability Oversight Committee (policy group for the local integrating organization) approved membership applications for the organization's Implementation Committee. The Implementation Committee had its first meeting on October 22nd in Friday Harbor. Barbara Rosenkotter was elected Chair, and Steve Revella, Vice Chair. The group began the process of reviewing priority Action Agenda strategies for the San Juan's.

South Sound Action Area

- The Squaxin Island Tribe hosted the 2010 South Sound Science Symposium on October 27th. The agenda included information on stressors, climate change, biotic responses, solutions, and successes in the South Puget Sound. More in the Science and Technical report above.
- The workgroup of the South Puget Sound organization (local integrating organization) held a meeting on October 13 to continue preparing strategies and materials for advancing LIO efforts, including a refined membership list. The group is working to identify a contract administrator and staffing needs. A public meeting to announce the organization and discuss community involvement has been tentatively scheduled on December 17th, following the organizations Elected Officials Executive Committee meeting.

Whidbey Basin

- Skagit Alternative Futures has named a citizen committee and is working through alternatives. The group hosted speaker Robert Lang (University of Nevada/Brookings Mountain West) to provide perspective on population projections.
- A two-day Port Susan Threats Workshop was held to advance the planning using the open standards approach for the potential designation of a marine stewardship area. This workshop drew from across Island, Snohomish and Stillaguamish watersheds. Members from federal and state agencies, tribes, local governments, marine resource committees, salmon recovery watershed groups and others came together to identify the major threats to the Port Susan area and began to assess how best to address these threats. This work was built upon the Partnership funded "target setting" workshop held in early 2010.

- Planning is underway for the Whidbey Basin Science Symposium, which is funded through the NOAA community based restoration partnership. A work group has identified general areas (floodplains, estuaries and nearshore) of focus. The Partnership is currently soliciting feedback about work to advance through this workshop from the broader “Whidbey basin entities”. The Symposium is expected to be in March or April 2011.

Whatcom

- The WRIA 1 Joint Board voted to become the Local Integrating Organization for implementing of the Action Agenda in the Whatcom area.
- Preparation work for conversation with shellfish protection districts in support of Drayton Harbor to identify different strategies for engaging landowners.

Strait of Juan de Fuca Action

- Staff continues to work with the Strait Ecosystem Recovery Network (ERN) Strategic Planning Task Force and Steering Group in developing a Strategic Planning Framework for use during the 2011-2013 biennium. It's anticipated that this Framework will be discussed and finalized at the next meeting of the Strait ERN scheduled for December 3rd.
- Partnership staff, along with a member of the NOAA Regional Implementation Technical Team, participated in a retreat to update the N. Olympic Peninsula Watershed's overall salmon recovery strategy, a task that's accomplished every three years, and the update of their “Three-Year” Work Plan for use in 2011.
- Partnership staff worked with the Elwha River Fish Committee, led by Olympic National Park, to successfully prioritize actions that need to be accomplished in the 2011-2013 biennium to support recovery of the overall ecosystem and salmonid populations in the watershed.
- Partnership staff organized and led a meeting of the Strait ERN Oil Spill Task Force to update and prioritize the list of oil spill related actions important to the Strait Action Area. Inter-Action Area coordination on oil spill actions with the San Juan's was kicked off at this meeting.

Hood Canal Action Area

- Partnership staff continues to work closely with the Hood Canal Coordinating Council on their Integrated Watershed Planning Initiative. The Council held their first workshop to introduce this effort broadly to the Hood Canal community. The workshop focused on connecting human values and benefits to specific ecosystem components. A follow-up meeting is tentatively scheduled for December to begin target selection.
- The Skokomish Indian Tribe and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife recently submitted their proposed recovery plan for Skokomish River Chinook Salmon. This plan largely utilizes funds from the Cushman Dam settlement to implement proposed actions.

- Staff worked with the Hood Canal Coordinating Council technical work group and with the Department of Ecology on wastewater and On Site Sewage messaging around dissolved oxygen. An upcoming work session with the WW-OSS work group is scheduled for early November. The main purpose of the meeting will be to answer science questions related to human nitrogen.
- Washington State Parks requested Partnership staff to attend a public meeting in the town of Brinnon, to assist in the explanation of wastewater and its contribution to dissolved oxygen. State Parks will begin construction of their advanced wastewater plant (incorporating “membrane bioreactor technology”) in 2011. There is potential for Brinnon to eventually connect homes, businesses and public facilities to the treatment plant.

North-Central Action Area

- Staff attended several meetings with the EPA and watershed grant project recipients to help tie upcoming work to the Action Agenda and the Sound-wide dashboard indicators.
- A solicitation was circulated in the West Sound for an Action Area representative to fill the seat of former ECB member Steve Bauer. A new Action Area representative will be named in November.
- Staff continues to work with the West Sound Watersheds Council to strategize how best to advance salmon and ecosystem recovery in the next year, including taking the first steps towards implementing adaptive management, an operating structure, and mechanisms to include greater technical guidance and feedback on projects. Staff is also helping lead an effort to map streams in the west Sound.